FBIS
DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

24 DECEMBER 1980

American Hostages

In an interview with the London-based Arabic newspaper ASH-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Prime Minister Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i stressed that the latest Iranian reply to the U.S. proposals "is our final stand." "There is no question of going back to negotiations on this issue," Raja'i continued, for "our conditions are clear and final." The prime minister summoned the Vatican's ambassador to Iran, Tehran radio reported, to protest remarks made by Pope John Paul II about the continued detention of the hostages. The Iranian Embassy in Bonn described as "an impertinence" the characterization of Iran's financial demands as a "ransom." In its statement, reported by the West German press agency DPA, the embassy said that Iran is "merely demanding ... its own, incontestable assets" whose value is three times more than all the "very dubiously maintained claims of American companies and persons." In a related development, Tehran radio's Arabic service reported in its press review that "Archbishop Hilarion Capucci will come to Tehran to take part in the Christmas cermeony that will be held for the U.S. hostages."

An unattributed commentary by Tehran radio said Secretary of State Edmund Muskie's rejection of Iran's terms for the release of the hostages is a "most comic thing" and shows that the United States is not interested in securing their release. The radio said that henceforth "responsibility for any event in connection with the hostages rests directly with America," and it warned the United States against prolonging the negotiations in an attempt to embarrass Iran into greater concessions and expecting to receive the hostages in a "beautiful basket" and "gift box." "The only way ... for saving the lives of the hostages and for their release" and for avoiding the "disgrace" of their "probable trial," the commentary stressed, is for the United States to accept Iran's conditions. Turning to the hostages themselves, the radio described as "ridiculous ... comic and childish" a recent U.S. contention that some of the hostages are imprisoned and others have failed to receive proper medical attention. "They are in a very satisfactory condition," it maintained, but the time has passed when U.S. diplomats could stay on the Caspian coast "in the most comfortable conditions." Referring to reports that Iran wants to resolve the hostage issue in order to receive Western assistance, the commentary said that if Iran is truly interested in such assistance, it would have taken a completely different line.

Iran Domestic Affairs

Selection of Ministers--Speaking to an open session of the Majlis, reported by Tehran radio, Prime Minister Raja'i said the selection of ministers is "one of the important issues in dispute" between himself and President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr. Raja'i said his own appointment as prime minister has never recieved Bani-Sadr's "full consent," and the president has not agreed to Raja'i's demand for prime ministerial freedom to select all but a number of ministers without presidential approval. Following a meeting in which the president, prime minister and Majlis speaker participated, Raja'i said, agreement was reached to refrain from publishing such disputes in the newspapers before discussion with a five-man commission. Raja'i asserted that after discussing the selection of ministers with Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and public prosecutor Musavi-Ardebili, further proposals for ministers of finance and commerce were rejected by President Bani-Sadr. The prime minister added that he is also "in extreme difficulty" regarding Iran's lack of a foreign minister and called on the Majlis to hold a closed session at which the president should appear to justify his continued rejections of Raja'i's ministerial nominees.

Assassination Attempt--According to Tehran radio, chief public prosecutor 'Abdolkarim Musavi-Ardebeli narrowly escaped an assassination attempt when a bomb exploded as he was crossing a Tehran street. The radio portrayed the incident as a "new plot" by "enemies" of the Islamic revolution.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

An Iranian Armed Forces Joint Staff communique, carried by Tehran radio, reported that Iranian Air Force planes downed two invading Iraqi MiG's over Abadan. The communique also said Iraqi planes bombed Abadan at night, causing extensive casualties. In other fighting, the radio reported clashes on the Zahab, Qasr-e Shirin, Darkhovin and Gilan-e Gharab fronts and artillery exchanges around Ahvaz and Dezful. An Iraqi General Command communique, reported by Baghdad radio's Voice of the Masses, said that Iraqi troops halted an Iranian advance near Panjwin and that further clashes continued around Susangerd, Mehran and Abadan.

Lebanon

UN Offices--Beirut radio reported that while villagers in southern Lebanese submitted a memorandum to truce committee chairman Colonel Mayar protesting UNFIL's failure to protect them against Israeli military operations, demonstrators smashed windows of the UN building in Beirut and "unknown persons" set the offices on fire.

Zahlah Fighting--Despite earlier reports of a cease-fire, the Voice of Lebanon radio reported that the situation in the Biga' capital has deteriorated and that Syrian forces have resumed shelling the city. The radio also carried the text of a message sent by Phalangist forces commander Shaykh Bashir al-Jumayyil to the United Nations protesting the sudden and unjustifiable aggression" by the Syrian forces. An Arab Deterrent Forces (ADF) spokesman, however, criticized "distorted" and "exaggerated" news and claimed that, in general, "total calm" prevailed in the city. The ADF statement, broadcast by Beirut radio, said ADF units fired for 15 minutes at a sniper after he shot and killed an ADF officer. The spokesman also claimed that ADF units have refrained from entering the city to arrest those who killed five Syrian soldiers on 19 December and have not shelled Zahlah with artillery.

Afghanistan

Defense Minister Lt Gen Mohammad Rafi', in an interview reported by Kabul radio, strongly rejected reports by Western news agencies that Cuban and Bulgarian soldiers are fighting in the country. "Apart from the Soviet Union's limited units," he claimed, "there are no other foreign units ... in Afghanistan."

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RAFI' DENIES PRESENCE OF CUBAN, BULGARIAN TROOPS

LD231852 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] The Western imperialist news agencies, headed by American imperialism, the custodian of its interests, have again fabricated the lie that Cuban and Bulgarian soldiers are fighting in Afghanistan against counterrevolutionary elements. Lt Gen Mohammad Rafi', DRA minister of national defense, in an interview with a BAKHTAR correspondent, vigorously rejected this inflammatory and full of lies news which the Western news agencies published by another bought mercenary of imperialism.

Lt Gen Mohammad Rafi' said: The Western false broadcasting machinery wants to regain its interests, which have been lost with the victory of the Sawr Revolution, by means of these fabrications. Lt Gen Mohammad Rafi' added: It is clear to all that, apart from the Soviet Union's limited units which came to this country in accordance with the treaty of friendship, good-neighbor relations and cooperation between Afghanistan and the USSR and in accordance with the UN Charter and the request of the DRA to repel the external aggression, there are no other foreign units of soldiers in Afghanistan. The heroic army of Afghanistan had and has the ability to deal a tooth-aching reply to the unworthy and bought elements of counterrevolutionaries. He added that the DRA's Ministry of Defense regards this fabrication of the imperialist news agencies as hostile propaganda against the Sawr Revolution, clear to all, unfounded and far from the truth.

It is worth mentioning that the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a new days ago also officially rejected the Western media's lies.

MINISTERS ATTEND SEED DISTRIBUTION CONFERENCE

LD232128 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] The supreme council of the Improved Seeds Company held a meeting today at the company under the chairmanship of Fazel Rahim Momand, minister of agriculture and land reform, who is also the chairman of the company's supreme council. The meeting was attended by Finance Minister 'Abdol Wakil; Mines and Industry Minister Mohammad Esma'il Danesh; Ghulam Muhauudin Shahbaz, head of statistics at the State Planning Committee; Mohammad Hasan Payam, general director for popularizing agriculture and agricultural products; and the chairmen of the Afghan Fertilizer Company, the Agriculture Development Bank; the Cooperatives Development Association, the Department of Agricultural Research and the Executive Department.

The minister of agriculture and land reform began by mentioning the attention paid by the DRA Government to giving effective aid to the toiling peasants of the country and the expansion and development of the agriculture sector in Afghanistan. He also drew the attention of those responsible to the need to implement the revolution government's program, particularly as regards distribution of improved seeds with a view to increasing the level of annual production of foodstuffs.

Mirza Punjshiri, the president of the Improved Seeds Company, later gave necessary explanations about the company's activities last year concerning the production and distribution of improved wheat seeds, cotton and cereals, which was listened to with interest by the supreme council.

KABUL PRESS ATTACKS PAKISTAN'S ZIAUL HAQ

LD222142 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Excerpts] Dear listeners, we now bring to you a part of a commentary which has been pusblished in the latest issue of HAQIQAT-E ENQILAB-E SAWR concerning the political and social crisis in Pakistan.

General Ziaul Haq, the military dictator of Pakistan, is facing the crisis that every usurper does; that is, the question of the practice of power and force. The actions he carried out against the legal government of the late Z.A. Bhutto, ex-Premier of Pakistan, with much fuss and effort tried to prove that (?he is the guardian of Islam) and he has claimed that his military regime is for a temporary period and that he will soon turn things over to the representatives of the people through popular election.

Despite the fact that the military regime has embarked, on the one hand, on savage and terrorist actions and, on the other hand, cries about Islam, the broad masses of the people of Pakistan openly regard the military regime as illegal and the generals as plunderers. The [words indistinct], for which the generals expressed their support on the surface, is not capable of preventing the present legal crisis. The regime of the generals in Pakistan has come to power not out of religious beliefs but for the purpose of a [word indistinct] government for the interests of imperialism and the monopoly of the feudal lords. But now the situation has gone so far that if the regime wants to maintain political stability in the country it will not succeed, because, first of all, the military government has lost its credibility among the people and if the regime terminated some of its obligatory laws then in that case the storm of the wrath of the people would eliminate the regime like wood chips.

The imperialist masters of the Arab forces, chauvinist China and Ziaul Haq, know that the military regime cannot be imposed on people by force of an iron mace. That is why they have set in motion their efforts to cover their military dictatorship with (?foreign help) and a political mask. These efforts are made from abroad because the military regime in Pakistan has become notorious and isolated. Efforts to stick the white color of Islam on the black face of the military dictatorship began a few months ago. But this has not been (?very) successful; and no change has occurred to the opinion of the people of Pakistan, who think that Ziaul Haq is nothing more than a traitor and usurper and that his regime has been installed by imperialism and the exploitative reactionary classes.

In the course of the so-called Islamic conferences, too, efforts were made to (?enhance the political position) of Ziaul Haq in order to give him the status of a shrewd political personality and diminish the hatred of the people of Pakistan against him. Under such conditions, where the military regime relies on the caretaking of imperialism, it has therefore increased its military activity for the enhancement of the international military strategy of imperialism and the Chinese chauvinists. It is continuing its undeclared war against Afghanistan shamelessly.

Another important question is that the feelings of the people of Pakistan against the military regime dictatorship and against imperialism have become very deep. They have learned that the military regime has been imposed on them by imperialism. They have seen that when the destructive activity against the Afghan revolution on the soil of Pakistan was (?set in motion), along with that cruelties and obligatory measures also increased against the people of Pakistan.

Now, while the IMF and the World Bank have gained a free hand in the Pakistani economy, through the proposals of these imperialist sources the price of basic consumer goods has increased drastically, as a result of which numerous problems have confronted people with low incomes. Therefore, in the opinion of the people of Pakistan it is very clear that the regime installed in Pakistan has links, with so many strings, to Washington and Beijing. These causes will make ready the epoch-making, great democratic forces--antinational [as heard], and antimilitary and anti-imperialist--in the near future.

KABUL REPORTS UNREST IN PAKISTANI BALUCHISTAN

GF211555 Kabul in Urdu to South Asia 1330 GMT 21 Dec 80

[Text] The Pakistani province of Baluchistan is facing problems with law and order. The situation is very tense. The communication systems in the cities, including Quetta, are in poor condition; murder and looting are common on the road between Quetta and Makran. The people of Makran claim that elements in the Pakistani military government are supporting the bandits. They add that the military courts are punishing innocent people while allowing the guilty to go free. A spokesman of the Makran people has strongly condemned the activities of these army personnel and accused them of taking bribes amounting to hundreds of thousands of rupees monthly from the Makran people.

Reports from Baluchistan say that many members of the Baluch student organization were arrested during Ziaul Haq's visit to Quetta. The organization has expressed anger over the activities of the military government and accused the government of creating obstacles to the organization under one pretext or another.

HIWAD SUPPORTS REGIONAL PEACE, STABILITY

LD212310 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 0235 GMT 21 Dec 80

[Review of the Afghan Press of 20 December]

[Excerpts] "We Are Making Continuous and Relentless Efforts Toward the Consolidation of Peace" is the headline of the editorial in yesterday's HIWAD, which is herewith brought to you:

The support and backing of our party and government by our toiling people is increasing from day to day, and the implementation of development plans to raise the standard of living of the people and to improve the domestic situation in our homeland proves to everyone that our national and democratic government, by making maximum use of the existing conditions and possibilities, is trying to create an atmosphere of peace and stability, not only in our country, but in the region and to maintain it.

The imperialists and hegemonists who satisfy their plundering interests in tension and squabble are trying to create hotbeds of tension. As a result of their aggressive and provocative policies, the situation in our region and in Asia has deteriorated considerably. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, in accordance with its peace-loving policy, believes that the problems of southwest Asia should be solved by peaceful means through talks and understanding, based on the principles of respect for the national sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and nonaligned status of the countries which are situated in the region. The peace-loving countries of the world also support and maintain this stand and opinion. It is obvious that the longer a political solution and settlement of the situation is delayed, the more the imperialist and hegemonist circles and forces will take advantage of the situation. In that case the problems and disadvantages of the toliers will increase.

The antiprogress character of imperialism and reaction has become the sole cause of the fact that whenever a movement is started and people become the rulers of their own destiny, these heretic forces, in an unholy alliance, embark on provocation, conspiracy and hundreds of intrigues.

The people of Afghanistan, being fully aware of the ominous intentions of the world-devouring imperialism, headed by U.S. imperialism, resolutely and broadly support the peace initiatives of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan: They come together to form revolutionary defense groups in order to crush mercenaries, ruffians, thieves and bandits. They deal such resolute blows to these ruffians that they will never be forgotten. Our people, together with their national and democratic government, regard peace and stability as the basic condition for the implementation of construction and renewal plans, and that is why they are making indefatigable efforts to attain peace and stability, through understanding and talks or through the elimination of the [words indistinct] and nucleous and cells, which create tension and (?provocation).

As we stand ready to shake the hands of friendship and brotherhood, we hope to see our region free from tension and hostility so that the toilers of our country and other countries of the region will be able to build their homeland, without fear and in peace, in an atmosphere of understanding, solidarity and fraternal cooperation. This is our aspiration and this is our path; we are pursuing this path without the least hesitation or delay.

PDPA'S LA'EQ, RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS DENOUNCE REBELS

GF191639 Kabul in Urdu to South Asia 1330 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] Some (?160) religious scholars, in a meeting with Solayman La'eq, member of the PDPA Central Committee and the Revolution Council, expressed their full support for the revolution and its new phase and denounced the traitorous activities of the agents of the imperialists against the country and the revolution. On this occasion, Solayman La'eq, explaining the government's policy on religious freedom, Islam and the preservation of Afghan traditions, exposed the conspiracies of the Chinese, of U.S. imperialism and of internal and external reactionaries.

Some of the religious scholars speaking on the occasion expressed their gratitude for the revolutionary government in following a policy based on respect for Islamic principles. A resolution denouncing the subversive activities of world imperialism and genocide, carried out by the insurgents at the behest of world imperialism, Chinese expansionism, local and foreign reactionaries and Egyptian, Israeli and Pakistani military rulers, was also passed.

The resolution further stated: We appeal to our brethren who left the country because of Amin and his criminal band to return to their beloved country of Afghanistan and to participate in the reconstruction of their country. The resolution also condemned the atrocities perpetrated by the Pakistani ruler Ziaul Haq against the Muslims of that country and expressed hatred for this agent of U.S. imperialism, who has started an undeclared war against our country.

DRA CLAIMS CONTINUED SUCCESSES AGAINST REBELS

Faryab Volunteers

LD192150 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] On the basis of a decision of the Third Plenum of the PDPA Central Committee and of the desire to cleanse our beloved Afghanistan of the filthy rebels--those enemies of our country and of our toiling people--over 60 militant party activists from Faryab Province volunteered yesterday to fight alongside their Sarandoy brothers and left Meymaneh for one of the battlefronts.

Before the departure of these alert and revolutionary youths, the provincial party secretary and the governor of Faryab spoke about the effects of the new stage of development of the Sawr Revolution on the life of our toiling people and condemned the criminals of international imperialism, internal and external reaction, Chinese chauvanism and the militarists of Pakistan. He wished the revolutionary militant youths further successes in eliminating the counterrevolutionary elements.

Nangarhar-Baghlan Group 'Punished'

LD201016 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] A group of counterrevolutionaries, who have engaged in highway robbery, murder and terrorism in the (Khogiani) district of Nangarhar Province and in Baghlan Province on the orders of their imperialist masters and regional reaction--led by the world-devouring U.S. imperialism--have recently been punished for their shameful, inhuman and anti-Islamic actions by the heroic armed forces and party activists of the Sarandoy.

According to reports, a large number of U.S. Chinese and Pakistani weapons have been seized from these criminals. According to a source in Baghlan, two of the terrorists, Imam (Qorin) and (Hazrat Mohammad), after confessing their inhuman actions, aided in the recovery of a certain amount of stolen government property.

Balkh, Faryab Rebels Arrested

LD201524 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] A number of counterrevolutionary murderers and terrorists, who have disrupted the peaceful life of our toilers in the Chahar Bulaq district of Balkh Province and in the Kuh-e Sayyad district of Faryab Province on the orders of their imperialist masters, have recently been arrested and punished for their deeds through the efforts of the noble people, security forces and party activists of these districts.

The security forces of these provinces report that (Serajuddin) and ('Azatullah) of the village of (Shayrpak-Timur) in Chahar Bulaq district, along with other persons, are undergoing interrogation. Various makes of U.S. Chinese and Pakistani weapons and ammunition have been seized from these thieves and criminals.

Qonduz Band 'Punished'

LD211655 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 21 Dec 80

[Text] According to a BAKHTAR agency correspondent's report from Qonduz, a number of counterrevolutionaries and criminals headed by Zafer and Anarkol, who were engaged for a while in murdering, terrorism and looting, and disrupting the social life of the people of the village of Kalagan, city of Qonduz, have recently been punished for their shameful actions by the party activists and security force with the cooperation of the noble people of this region. Various types of American and Chinese weapons, a large number of bullets and printed leaflets, which prove their collaboration with bandits abroad, were seized by the security force.

Qandahar Force 'Eliminated'

LD211703 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 21 Dec 80

[Text] A large number of counterrevolutionaries, those bought servants of of international imperialism, Chinese chauvinism and reaction of Pakistan, headed by U.S. imperialism, who were engaged for a whole in murder terrorism and intimidation and disturbed the calm and peaceful life of the people of Qandahar, Qonduz and the village of (Bahar khel), district of Kuhestan, province of Parvan, have been eliminated by party activists and the security forces with the cooperation of the noble people of these regions.

The BAKHTAR agency correspondent reports from (Andahar) that a number of the homeland and revolution traitors, (?headed) by Sarwar Nehro, resident of the village of (Narkhodak), district of (Dalan), who disrupted the peaceful life of the people of the Qandahar city wards, were eliminated on 17 December by the police security force.

More Qandahar Rebels 'Punished'

LD222324 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1530 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] A large group of counterrevolutionaries and traitors of the homeland, who at the behest of their imperialist masters, headed by the world-devouring U.S. imperialists, disrupted the calm and peaceful life of the noble people in some villages of Maywand district, Qandahar Province, through murder and intimidation, have recently been punished for criminal activities, including those of their leader, by the security force with the cooperation of the noble people of Maywand district. A number of them have been captured. A source in the Qandahar security force reports: A number of various types of American, Chinese and Pakistani weapons and a large number of hand grenades, bullets and explosives were seized by the security forces from these thieves and murderers.

SOVIET AID DISTRIBUTED IN KABUL PROVINCE

GF221439 Kabul in Urdu to South Asia 1330 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] A few days ago part of the commodity aid worth 100 million rubles donated by the USSR was distributed among the people of Mohammad Aghah in Kabul Province. On this occasion leading party members and the people praised the brotherly ties between the USSR and DRA and expressed gratitude for the timely Soviet aid.

AFP: THREE REBEL GROUPS SPLIT FROM ALLIANCE

BK220359 Hong Kong AFP in English 0307 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] Islamabad, 22 Dec (AFP)--Three Afghan Muslim rebel groups, considered to be pro-West and moderate, have split from the Islamic Alliance for the Liberation of Afghanistan, sources from opposing groups said here today. The alliance formerly included five of the Afghan freedom movements represented in Peshawar, Pakistan, near the Afghan border.

Two arch-conservative parties--the Jam'iat-e Eslami and the Hezb-e Islami faction headed by Yunes Qales--want to set up a military front open to rebels of different persuasions, the sources added. To this end they are negotiating with the Hezb-e Eslami faction headed by engineer Gulbuddin Ekmatiar, considered the group best organized from a military standpoint. Last March that faction decided to stay outside the alliance after Mr Ekmatiar claimed his party represented 70 percent of the Afghan resistance and asked that it be given that amount of representation within the Islamic Alliance; he was turned down.

According to Mohammad Gulabningarhari, head of the Afghanistan National Liberation Front, the moderates signed an agreement 10 days ago giving themselves three weeks to start up the new organization. Meanwhile, similar talks were being held within the fundamentalist movement, according to a spokesman for one of the fundamentalist groups.

"The alliance never really worked and a break-up was thought inevitable early last summer. We plan to create a liberation organization in which all political tendencies except for Marxists and admitted opponents of Islam, will have their place and maintain their personality," Mr Gulabningarhari added.

The new organization will be based on respect for the Afghan people's sovereignty and will call for elections once Soviet troops withdraw from Afghanistan, he said. But three of the fundamentalist groups do not go along with these ideas, he added. Moderates from the National Liberation Front and the National Islamic Front decided to break with the alliance shortly after its president, Dr Abdul Swiaf, made statements rejecting Western military and financial aid just as the moderate leaders were in Europe trying to get money.

AFP: LEADERS SUPPORT BREZHNEV GULF PEACE PLAN

BK191142 Hong Kong AFP in English 0848 GMT 19 Nov 80

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Excerpt] New Delhi, 19 Dec (AFP)--The Afghan Government has launched a vigorous campaign advocating for an early political settlement of the almost one-year-old Afghan crisis, analysis of speeches of Afghan leaders, study of Kabul newspaper reports and radio broadcast during the last two weeks suggest.

Kabul newspapers are carrying editorial coments more frequently than before, advising Pakistan and Iran to come to the negotiating table. The state-owned Kabul radio had been broadcasting news and commentaries on the need for an early settlement, more often quoting from the speeches made by Afghan President Babrak Karmal, Foreign Minister Shah Mohammed Dost and others.

The radio had also been highlighting the speeches made by Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev concerning Afghanistan during his four-day state visit to India which ended on Dec 11. Area experts here view the sudden spurt in the campaign as an attempt by the Kabul regime to influence Pakistan and Iran at a time when the problems being faced by these two countries are growing rapidly. The experts who asked not to be named cited the continuing Iran-Iraq war, internal disensions in Tehran and the reported tension in the Indo-Pak borders following allegations of troop movements both by New Delhi and Islamabad, as part of the problems confronting the two countries.

"Our people want to live in peace with their neighbours and have no intention to interfere in their internal affairs... we believe that the only way to iron out the existing differences is to hold peaceful negotiations," the English language newspaper NEW KABUL TIMES said in an editorial Wednesday. "The Afghan Government has already taken the initiative and made constructive and specific proposals for finding a political solution of the crisis in the region," the paper said.

The Kabul radio broadcast a commentary on Tuesday last quoting Foreign Minister Shah Mohammed Dost advocating that the proposal made by Mr Brezhnev during his visit to India was "the mainstay of our proposal made to Iran and Pakistan." "The conditions prevailing in the region are going bad to worse by passing of time....the only way to reduce tension in the region is to sit down with DRA (Democratic Republic of Afghanistan) representatives and find ways and means to remove the causes of tension created around Afghanistan," the radio had quoted Mr Dost as saying.

On last Monday the radio broadcast a speech of Mr Karmal who reiterated that the Afghan Government was "ready to carry out the proposals" made by Mr Brezhnev for a political settlement of the Afghanistan crisis. "I want to make it clear once again that we are prepared to go anywhere at any time to discuss with Pakistan and Iran about the problems around Afghanistan and to solve it through political talks," the radio quoted Mr Karmal as saying.

Area experts, however, maintain that the Kabul regime was doing a futile exercise, as all the recent offers for talks and negotiations were based on the May 13 proposal, which had already been rejected by both Tehran and Islambabad. "They (Afghan leaders) should have come out with something new or at least with an amended version of the May 13 proposal, then it might have had clicked," said a diplomatic area expert.

REDDY, GANDHI MOURN KOSYGIN IN MESSAGES TO USSR

BK201557 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] President Sanjiva Reddy and Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi have expressed grief over the passing away of Mr Kosygin. In his message to Soviet President Brezhnev, Mr Sanjiva Reddy described Mr Kosygin as a good friend of long standing. In her message to the Soviet prime minister, Mrs Gandhi said the people in India recall Mr Kosygin's close association with the development of India-Soviet relations and his contribution to the enlargement of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

PARLIAMENT PASSES NATIONAL SECURITY BILL

BK230940 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Excerpt] Parliament has passed the national security bill seeking to provide for preventive detention of antisocial and antinational elements in specific cases. Sitting late last night, the Rajya Sabha approved the bill which has already been adopted by the Lok Sabha. Several opposition amendments were turned down.

The motion moved by Home Minister Zail Singh was finally adopted by the house. The motion received the support of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam [DMK] and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam [AIADMK]. Before the adoption of the bill, the entire opposition, except four parties--the DMK, AIADMK, Muslim League and National Conference--staged a walkout protesting against the continuance of the sitting beyond midnight.

GANDHI, GOVERNMENT REACT TO ASSAM VIOLENCE

Gandhi: Agitation Challenges Legitimacy

BK191344 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Excerpt] The prime minister has said that agitations are an attempt to undermine the government's legitimacy through extraconstitutional action. Addressing the conference of inspectors general of police in New Delhi today, Mrs Gandhi said agitations pose a major challenge. She referred to the farmers agitation in some states and said it is a well planned effort by forces of destabilization to obstruct the working of the government. The prime minister also referred to the Assam agitation and said it is an extreme example of regionalism.

Aid to Socialist Organizations Halted

BK191602 Hong Kong AFP in English 0530 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Excerpts] New Delhi, Dec 19 (AFP)--Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's government has debarred 35 organisations from accepting foreign contributions without prior permission of the federal government, thus primarily affecting several pro-Soviet organizations in the country, published reports said today.

Some of the pro-Soviet or pro-socialist organizations which will be affected by the order are: All India Peace and Solidarity Organization, Indo-Soviet Cultural Society, All India Indo-GDR Friendship Association, Indo-Czech Cultural Society, and the National Federation of Progressive Writers.

Gandhi Warning

BK220751 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1730 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi has warned agitators in Assam and other parts of the northeastern region that any resort to violence will be dealt with firmly. She was inaugurating a meeting of the Northeastern Council in New Delhi today. Mrs Gandhi said a great deal of patience has been shown in spite of (?strains). Divisive elements cannot be tolerated.

Mrs Gandhi said India is known for its tradition of hospitality and good will. She regretted that the agitators unfortunately have not understood this vital ingredient of our national genius. The prime minister said that the agitation in the region has not helped national integration. She said despite the year-long agitation, the blockade of oil and timber and the disruption of administrative machinery, the government had insured supplies of essential commodities to the people of the region.

Opposition Leaders Arrested

BK220848 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] In Assam, former Chief Minister Golap Barbora and State Janata Party President G.S. Bhattacharya were arrested today in Gauhati. Eleven party legislators and a number of party workers were also arrested on the charge of violating prohibitory orders. They were arrested in front of their party office as they came in a procession toward the courts. A magistrate present at the spot declared the assembly unlawful for violating the prohibitory orders. Several lawyers of Gauhati also courted arrests in front of the deputy commissioner's courts. The police used teargas to disperse groups of people at (Pan Bazaar) near the courts.

Police Fire on Crowd

BK221111 Hong Kong AFP in English 1029 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] New Delhi, 22 Dec (AFP)--Three people were killed and an unknown number of others injured when police fired on a large crowd of anti-foreigner demonstrators in Assam today. Reports reaching here said the firing took place at Rangiya, a railway township, about 50 km from Gauhati, when the agitationists tried to storm a government office. An earlier report said police burst teargas shells in Gauhati to break up similar demonstrators. No casualty was reported.

Today's casualties bring the number of people killed in the disturbed eastern frontier state to six in less than a week, apart from those injured. Three had lost their lives in firings on Thursday last. The agitation against 'illegal' immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh and Nepal was intensified by its supporters by launching a 13-day mass "passive non-resistance campaign" on December 18 last, of offering themselves for arrest by violating prohibitory orders. At least 25 others were injured in police baton-charges or teargassing at several other places, the reports said, quoting official information received at Gauhati, Assam's capital. There were also incidents of police opening fire in the air to scare away the demonstrators.

Earlier, in New Delhi, Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi earlier warned the "divisionist elements" of various hues in the northeastern frontier region, including Assam, of stern actions to deal with them. "We have shown a great deal of patience inspite of the strains but divisive elements cannot be tolerated. Any resort to violence has to be sternly dealt with," she said addressing the Northeastern Council, an apex body concerned with the development works of the region.

Three Killed

BK221247 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] In Assam, three persons were killed and several others injured when police fired on a crowd which tried to storm into the sub-deputy collector's office at Rangiya, about 50 kms from Gauhati today. Police opened fire when bursting of teargas shells and baton charge failed to disperse the crowd. Several police were injured in brickbatting. The crowd violated prohibitory orders in a bid to force the entry into the sub-deputy collector's court.

AFP: INDIA TO NEGOTIATE LIBYAN OIL OFFER

BK191614 Hong Kong AFP in English 1502 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 19 (AFP)--India has decided to negotiate immediately Libya's latest offer of crude oil delivery.

Official sources here today disclosed that a delegation would be leaving for Libya tomorrow for the purpose. They said the latest offer was involved about one million tonnes. This will be in addition to 30,000 barrels Libya reportedly offered for the last two months of this year. India has also initiated steps to increase the indigenous production of crude by stepping up output from the already developed oil fields and exploring new prospective oil deposits both on-shore and off-shore.

Petroleum Minister P.C. Sethi told the state-run New Delhi television tonight that the government was considering the possibility of increasing production from the Bombay high off-shore fields from the present 12 million tonnes to 17 million tonnes. He said there was a French proposal that the present Bombay high output could be stepped up substantially. Its details were being worked out. Earlier, a TIMES OF INDIA newspaper report here said this morning, while reporting the latest Libyan offer, that India might accept it provided there were "no strings attached." The newspaper said India did not lift the supply offered for the last two months of this year as it was unable to tie up swapping arrangements.

UAE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ARRIVES

BK191308 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] The UAE has offered to supply more oil to India. Stating this to newsmen on his arrival at Delhi airport this afternoon, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi said his country has been supplying oil to India and if it needs more we will give it, as India is a friendly country. The UAE minister has come to New Delhi in connection with the Indo-UAE joint commission meeting. Al-Nu'aymi is carrying a message from the UAE president for Prime Minister Gandhi.

AFP: INDIA RECEIVES SOVIET MILITARY HELICOPTERS

BK191604 Hong Kong AFP in English 0510 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] New Delhi, 19 Dec (AFP)--India has recently received a new batch of an unspecified number of MI-8 tactical support helicopters from the Soviet Union, published reports said today.

Quoting reliable sources, the reports appearing in Indian newspapers said that the helicopters have already been dispatched to strategic areas. The agreement for the supply of MI-8 helicopters was signed between India and the Soviet Union in 1971 and since then Moscow had supplied 40 MI-8 helicopters. The fresh arrivals would now further strengthen the power of the Indian Air Force, the reports said.

BRIEFS

CSSR TRADE PROTOCOL--India and Czechoslovakia have signed a trade protocol setting up objectives to be achieved in the fields of industrial cooperation, trade, science and technology and electronics. The protocol was signed by Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Andrej Barcak in New Delhi today at the end of the ninth meeting of the Indo-Czechoslovak joint committee. Both the sides have agreed to start negotiations to draw up a long-term program for the exchange of commodities during 1980-85. [Text] [Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Dec 80 BK]

ZIUAL HAQ DISCUSSES ISLAMIC CONFERNCE WITH NEWSMEN

BK191118 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1000 GMT 19 Dec 80

[Text] President Mohammad Ziaul Haq has reiterated that Pakistan, an independent Islamic and nonaligned country, is determined to follow a policy of peaceful coexistence. He was taling to newsmen at Lahore Airpot this afternoon after his arrival at the provincial capital on a brief visit.

In reply to a question, the president clarified that there is no reason for anxiety and concern and it is our endeavor to develop peaceful relations with [words indistinct]. He said that although certain quarters are trying to worsen our relations with India, Pakistan will continue to pursue a peaceful policy toward its neighbors.

Replying to another question he said that the Afghanistan problem will be the basic issue of the agenda of the Islamic summity to be held in holy Mecca. The agenda will be prepared by the Islamic foreign ministers prior to the conference. Replying to another question the president said that the Islamic countries are considering the issue of cooperation among Islamic countries on the pattern of the European Economic Community and it will be discussed at the Mecca conference. When asked whether there is any proposal for establishing a peace force on the pattern on UN peace force the president replied that we ourselves are capable of defending our country.

Punjab Governor Lt Gen Ghulam Jilani Khan, high civil and military officials and others received the president at the airport.

CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ MEETS WITH HAQ 20 DEC

BK210954 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] Visiting U.S. Congressman Stephen Solarz called on President Mohammad Ziaul Haq in Rawalpindi this evening and remained with him for sometime. Solarz, who is expected to become the next chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs of the House Foreign Relations Committee, is now on a familiarization tour of the countries which are the responsibility of his subcommittee. The foreign secretary was also present at the meeting.

GOVERNMENT DENIES TROOPS TO BE DEPLOYED OVERSEAS

BK201536 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Dec 80

[Text] The Government of Pakistan has categorically denied that Pakistan has any military agreement with Saudi Arabia or any other country for the stationing of Pakistani troops anywhere outside Pakistan.

The government's attention was drawn to a news agency report circulated during Saudi Crown Prince Fahd's visit to Pakistan alleging that Pakistani troops will be deployed in Saudi Arabia. The report also alleged that the step was part of the regional security organization of the United States. An official statement has drawn attention to this. The Saudi Government has already rejected the report. The official statement said that the report is part of the propaganda carried out by this agency against Pakistan, a campaign that is apparently aimed at diverting world attention from the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan and from the rights of the Afghan people.

U.S. RESPONSE TO 'FINAL REPLY' ON HOSTAGES ATTACKED

LD231400 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1133 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Over a year has passed since the afternoon when the Muslim student followers of the imam's policy passed over the walls of that seemingly invincible fortress and that center of corruption and occupied America's den of espionage and the American spies were taken hostage. At no time has this issue clarified the opportunistic quality of America as much as at present. Now, the people of the world can clearly see how the imperialist regime which had made embodiments of innocence from the hostages is now bargaining about returning Iran's legitimate rights in return for their release.

After the Islamic Consultative Assembly set out the conditions for releasing the hostages, the government took charge of the hostages and, due to the severance of relations between Iran and America, Algeria accepted to act as mediator between the two countries for the exchange of the hostages. Although the Iranian conditions for the release of the hostages are detailed, in brief they are as follows: America should accept not to interfere in Iran's internal affairs any longer; it should return all the frozen Iranian deposits and assets; it should return the shah's wealth to Iran; and it should withdraw the claims and convictions which have been made against Iran or which exist. Although the conditions of Iran were translated for the Americans, the American officials said that the investigation of these requests concerning the wealth of the shah and the withdrawing of the claims in American courts against Iran would require greater investigation and more time. In order to remove the American excuses Iran announced that the American Government can deposit some money in the Central Bank in Algeria as a guarantee for the fulfillment of any of the conditions so that the Iranian Government may be assured of the U.S. promises concerning the investigation of Iranian requests. In this way, it was decided that America should deposit as a surety in the Central Bank of Algeria $10 billion in lieu of the wealth of the shah, $9 billion in lieu of the frozen Iranian assets, $4 billion in lieu of Iran's other deposits and the gold equivalent for $1 billion so that the American hostages may be released and so that later steps can be taken about the investigation of Iranian demands. The Iranian Government announced that this is the final reply of the Iranian Government.

Although the Iranian conditions have not left room for any excuses for America, nevertheless, American trickery manifests itself once again. Edmund Muskie, the American secretary of state, announced that Iran's demand concerning the deposit of $23 billion is unreasonable. He announced that the Iranian demands are beyond the powers of the American president. This is how one clearly sees that, despite all the propaganda games which Western imperialism has engaged in and despite all their attempts to seem the wronged party, they are not so interested in the solution of the hostage issue.

If we accept that America has really not got the power to pay such a sum for the hostages or that the American president does not have this power, then how can we explain the conspiracy of Tabas; and whose power was it that sent (?many) trained Marines and six planes and helicopters, each of which was worth millions of dollars, in order to attack the revolution and bomb the important centers which, thank God, ended in failure?

If America wishes to resolve the issue of the hostages, it should naturally give a positive response to Iran's lawful demands, but the most comic thing is to announce that Iran's reply is unreasonable. According to the imagination of Western politicans, they think that in this way they are putting Iran in an embarrasing position so that it might make greater concessions with every American reaction or, for instance, withdraw some of its demands. This American policy is based on the fact that it imagines that the special conditions of the war might force us to compromise over this issue and take the initiative which has been so far in Iran's hands and change it in favor of America. What the government has announced to America as its final answer, however, has made the issue abundantly clear to all the optimists in the Brzezinski and Muskie band who are spending their last days in the White House.

From now on no one can deceive international public opinion against Iran and say that Iran has created obstacles on the issue of releasing the spies, about whose spying activities we possess many documents. On the contrary, from now on the world will realize that the hue and cry which the West created over the hostage issue was more like a political cat and mouse game than kindness towaqrd 52 spy hostages. The American multinational companies neither feel sorry for the American hostages nor think of their freedom. They are purely looking for opportunities to put the anti-imperialist movements under political and propaganda pressures. Present conditions reveal the colonialistic and antihuman character of America rather than fulfilling its goals. From now on, responsibility for any event in connection with the hostages rests directly with America.

The American excuse for not accepting one of Iran's conditions, namely the return of the shah's wealth, is that as his wealth is not clear and requires investigation. This issue creates an obstacle for the solution of the problem. The Iranian Government, which is fully aware of the Western excuses, has announced in this connection that if the issue of the investigation into the shah's wealth and its return to Iran is a problem, until the issue is clarified America should pay a deposit of $10 billion, which is equivalent to the shah's wealth, to the national bank in Algeria so that this may be a surety for the acceptance of America's guarantee. The issue, however, is that Western imperialism raises most of these issues for the sake of making exuses and America's explanations make it abundantly clear that she does not wish to be the final loser in this political game, namely, the hostage taking.

Of course, it is not merely Edmund Muskie and Carter's clique in the White House who make such excuses. The publications which are dependent on multinational companies have also started the same tune. For instance, the SCOTSMAN newspaper writes in its editorial: It is not possible for America to agree to the payment of such sums to the Iranian Government. It continues: The payment of such sums by America will encourage extortion and the demanding of silence money. The Yorkshire POST, with its narrow capitalist point of view, expresses the view that if Iran had resolved the issue of American hostages it would enjoy greater sympathy and economic assistance on an international scale in the recent war.

Of course, the West is incapable of understanding the fact that if the Iranian revolution was interested in receiving assistance from the superpowers, it would be free of many of the problems which imperialism is creating.

They know full well that the Iranian revolution will at no time give up its independence in return for receiving assistance and being dependent. This is why we have not desired and do not desire the economic assistance of the West which is followed by dependence. That newspaper, continuing its commentary, announces that if the hostages were not taken Iraq would not have accepted the danger of attacking Iran. In this respect, perhaps that newspaper is telling the truth, because one of the reasons for the war imposed by Iraq on Iran might have been the strong position Iran adopted vis-a-vis the West and the holding of the spies as hostages. The Ba'thist regime waged this war precisely because of this problem which had been created for America, so that by weakening the regime of the Islamic Republic the Ba'thist regime might render a service to America. Despite all the propaganda of the imperialist world concerning the explanations of the American officials, however, America should not expect the spies who have a long record of treason to be released that easily, without the fulfilment of the Iranian demands by America.

The Iranian answer to America, which is Iran's final reply in this regard, should be a warning bell to the West and should dissuade it from future optimism concerning Iran's probable softening or disregard for its positions. The wise thing for America is to accept Iran's conditions, whose rejection cannot be explained in any way, in order to spare the lives of the hostages and prevent the disgrace which will result for America in the course of the probable trial of the hostages.

In any case, now that we have talked a lot about the issue of the hostages, it is not amiss if we also refer to the phony remarks of John Turner [presumably Trattner] at the end of our speech, who in a comic and childish way talks about the imprisonment and torture of the hostages. The spokesman of the American State Department has recently announced that, as far as he is informed, a number of American hostages are in prisons and no proper medical care is extended to those hostages who are ill.

These ridiculous remarks of John Turner [Trattner] are purely for inciting the feelings of the Americans; the hostages have been repeatedly visited by representatives of the Red Cross and international personalities and they have expressed satisfaction with their health. At the moment, they are in a very satisfactory condition. The other remark of his excellency Turner [Trattner], however, is even more ludicrous when he says that he does not believe that the hostages are spending their time on the shores of the Caspian, under very comfortable and pleasing circumstances. One should tell his excellency Turner [Trattner] that we follow all the Islamic and human principles about captives which have been laid down in Islam. The time when all the American diplomats were busy exploiting and plundering on the shores of the Caspian in the most comfortable conditions, however, has passed. The shores of the Caspian are no longer the beaches of the Mediterranean for the American spies. In short, if America imagines that by prolonging the issue and by not accepting the Iranian conditions it will experience greater leniency and that the hostages will be posted to Washington in a beautiful basket and a gift box, America had better leave its optimism aside and accept the Iranian conditions with greater realism; because this is the only way which can have a bright future for saving the lives of the hostages and for their release.

RAJA'I: IRAN ANSWER TO U.S. 'OUR FINAL STAND'

LD231447 London ASH-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Dec 80 p 1

[Interview granted by Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i to Hasan Luqays in Tehran--date not given]

[Text] [Question] Is it true that the Iranian Government received from Algeria a proposal to solve the Iraqi-Iranian war on the basis of the Algiers agreement?

[Answer] We have received no Algerian proposal whatsoever; on the other hand we have not given any answer or asked for any mediation. As long as the enemy is on our territory negotiations have no meaning and there will be no political solution because experience has always proved to us that when we enter into political channels to solve problems of this type enemy forces remain on the land and nothing changes in the field. What is required first is that they should withdraw and afterwards we will do what is appropriate.

[Question] Is your government's answer to the U.S. Government which you handed to the Algerian delegation regarding the release of hostages final or do you expect the Algerian delegation to return for further talks?

[Answer] This is our final stand. For our part there is no question of going back to negotiations on this issue. Our conditions are clear and final.

Asked whether he expects the U.S. attitude to be negative and a prelude to steps such as the Tabas operation, he said: Everything is possible with the Americans. As far as we are concerned we have submitted our just and appropriate conditions. We will not be the cause of any action taken by the United States.

[Question] Are you Muslim or Iranian first? Does your government's political line proceed from a national or Islamic premise?

[Answer] You know, of course, that the rumors spread by Iraq and its campaign of falsehoods is in order to justify this war against us and against our Islamic republic. He [presumably Saddam Husayn] says that we are Magians while knowing well that our revolution is Islamic and that the leader of this revolution is a religious authority whom we follow and emulate. If the people who spread such rumors about the revolution had said what they are saying during the shah's era it might have been true because the shah was proud of Cyprus and such legends. We would like all the world to follow Islam. How then within the Islamic context can we accept clinging to nationalism? We are proud that we are a government with a mission and there is nothing above Islam as far as we are concerned. The enemy's fear stems from this point.

[Question] Are the political differences in Iran deep and fundamental? How do you expect them to end?

[Answer] These are internal matters which are best kept within Iran. As brothers in the government we will solve our differences of view in a fundamental manner.

RAJA'I PROTESTS POPE'S REMARKS ON HOSTAGES

LD231140 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] Mr Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i, the prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, summoned the Vatican's ambassador to Tehran this morning and strongly objected to the remarks made by Pope John Paul II, the leader of the world's Catholics, on the occasion of Christmas in connection with the hostages.

RAFSANJANI THREATENS TRIAL FOR HOSTAGES

JN230944 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 23 Dec 80

[From the Press Review]

[Text] JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI reports on its last page the statements made by Majlis speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani during his meeting with local and foreign radio, television and press correspondents.

Replying to a question on possible U.S. rejection of the conditions set by the Majlis for the release of the hostages and the measures which the Iranian Government could take in this regard, Rafsajani said: The duties and responsibilities of the Iranian Government are clearly defined should the United States accept or reject the conditions. If the United States rejects these conditions, the hostages will definitely be tried. Rafsanjani added: We are fully aware that the United States intends to exploit the hostages issue as in the past, but we have pulled the rug out from under its feet.

Replying to a question about rumors that some generals of the defunct regime residing in Britain and elsewhere are planning a military coup in Iran, in light of the reports about a possible U.S. occupation of the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf, Rafsanjani said: We have declared right from the beginning that the United States will not stop plotting against Iran and that it is trying through its agents in the region and inside Iran itself to continue its plots against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Rafsanjani wondered about the connection among different rumors concerning a possible U.S. occupation of the three Iranian islands, Edmund Muskie's statements on the illegality of the Iranian conditions, for the release of the hostages and the recent Zionist aggression against southern Lebanon. Rafsanjani asked: What would be the future effects and results of these developments?

IRAN'S BONN EMBASSY JUSTIFIES HOSTAGE RANSOM

LD231650 Hamburg DPA in German 1547 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] Geneva/Bonn: 23 Dec (DPA)--A Swiss diplomat today had an opportunity of visiting three of the 52 hostages in Tehran. Following the visit he reported to the Swiss Foreign Ministry that the prisoners had taken the news that they would not be released by Christmas with composure. The diplomat, Swiss Charge d'Affaires in Tehran Flavio Meroni, had visited the Americans Bruce Laingen, Victor Tomseth and Michael Howland who have now been held by the Iranians for 413 days.

The Iranian Embassy in Bonn made a statement today on the press reports about Iran's financial demands from the United States. The statement says that Iran is merely demanding "its own assets and not a penny of foreign assets. It is even offering guarantees for all U.S. claims and is prepared to submit to international arbitration in the interests of clarifying these claims." The value of Iranian assets in American hands, the statement says, is three times higher than all "very doubiously maintained claims of American companies and persons."

The statement says that "in view of this state of affairs and the fact that Iran is demanding no financial advantage except the return of its own, incontestable assets, it is an impertinence to speak of a ransom."

SWISS EMBASSY PASSES GIFTS TO 3 HOSTAGES

NC232008 Paris AFP in English 1958 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] Tehran, 23 Dec (AFP)--The Swiss Embassy here today transferred Christmas presents to the three Americans held hostage in the Iranian Foreign Ministry for more than 13 months, Swiss Ambassador Erik Lang said. The gifts, provided by part of the Tehran diplomatic community, were mainly national specialities like cake and cookies, Mr Lang said. He added that the three U.S. diplomats, including former Charge d'Affaires Bruce Laingen, were in good physical and moral condition, despite the circumstances of their detention.

Mr Lang said that attempts to meet the 49 other hostages had never succeeded, because of constant refusal by the Iranian authorities. He added that gifts from the hostages' families had not yet arrived in Tehran. Meanwhile, it was not yet known when the televised interview with the hostages, announced yesterday would be screened. Tonight, Tehran radio attacked what it termed the "insults" by some Western press and rejected charges that Iran's conditions for the liberation of the hostages were "ransom demands."

RAFSANJANI EXPECTS U.S. TO SEIZE GULF ISLANDS

NC221639 Paris AFP in English 1636 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] Tehran, Dec 22 (AFP)--Iranian Parliament speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani told a press conference here today that Iran "has wounded the United States, which is continuing to plot" against the Islamic Republic.

The Hojjat ol-Eslam said that Tehran was expecting the United States, "since its failure in the Iranian-Iraqi war," to prepare "another scheme to provoke disorder in Iran." His comments paralleled those of government spokesman Behzad Nabavi, who said that "America was seeking to continue its plots by other means (than those of the Iraqi-Iranian conflict)." "The best pretext" for American "disembarcation in the Gulf," Mr Nabavi said, would be "troubles in the Strait of Hormuz," which links the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

The spokesman was referring to rumors that have been circulating here for some time, according to which the United States is preparing "the military occupation" of the islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb in the Strait.

Mr Nabavi indicated that his comment represented a warning to the United States not to undertake such an "occupation." He also advised governments in the Gulf region "not to fall into the trap of the superpowers."

The newspaper KAYHAN, which is close to the government, reported yesterday that documents found at the Episcopal (church) center at Isfahan, 400 kms (250 miles south of Tehran), indicated that the United States, Britain, Jordan and Arab Gulf states had plotted with Iraq in preparation for Baghdad's attack on Iran on September 22. The documents were made public at Isfahan by the para-military Guardians of the Revolution and allegedly cited statements by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn to a British secret service agent, who reportedly transmitted the information to a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative.

Yesterday, the Islamic Republican Party, which has the largest bloc of members in parliament, accused the United States of planning to "occupy the Iranian islands" in the Gulf.

COMMENTARY ON POSSIBLE U.S. MILITARY INTERVENTION

LD231804 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1148 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Recently, there have been rumors about American military intervention in the Strait of Hormuz and the occupation of three Iranian islands, called Tunbe-e Bozorg, Talib-e Kuchak, and Abu Musa. The spreading of such rumors coincides with provocative actions in the Middle East.

Recently, Israel attacked south Lebanon. In these attacks, hundreds of houses were destroyed and scores of innocent people killed and wounded. A few Syrian soldiers have also been martyred in these attacks. Following these attacks, the Syrian forces showed an immediate reaction and shelled the positions occupied by the Lebanese Phalangists, who are the allies and the mercenaries of Israel.

Syrian newspapers also wrote that shooting at the Syrian forces by the occupying regime in Al-Quds [Jerusalem] is not unconnected with the visit of American warships to the port of Haifa and the presence of the American aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf region.

ATH-THAWRAH writes: Syria will not retreat from its decisions regarding military-political affairs, because Syria only recognizes one path, which is the path of war.

In this connection, the remarks of the American officers who were present at last month's American maneuvers in Egypt are worthy of attention. This maneuver was carried out by the American rapid deployment forces in Egypt. The maneuver was code-named "Bright Star," and cost $25 million. It provided the opportunity for the American military forces to evaluate their weaknesses in desert areas and, in the case of war, in the Persian Gulf region. One American Army officer who had mainly served in the war zones in Vietnam and in mountainous regions in Europe said: I learned thousands of lessons from today's maneuver. Another officer said: The use of the equipment was really accompanied with a lot of headaches. Strong winds caused many difficulties for all the vehicles, especially Cobra and Blackhawk helicopters. [words indistinct] The sand also blocked the air filters of engines and weapons. The officers of the 101st Division said the M-16 rifles used by American soldiers are not very satisfactory; they said this is not a good weapon for desert areas. This weapon, which was used in the sixties in the war regions of Southeast Asia, loses its capability in desert areas. Its range is less than 500 meters. In this area America requires weapons which have a much bigger range and which can be used easily. American soldiers in these regions were forced to clean their weapons three times every day. [words indistinct]

The French news agency has written that the unsuccessful operation in Tabas clarified the deficiency [words indistinct] for operations in these regions. This is why in these maneuvers America made very effort to make up for these deficiencies. Their forces were trained under conditions which are exactly identical with conditions in the Middle East.

These attempts demonstrate that the warmongering attitude in America is on the increase, and it is preparing for greater aggressions in the future. Egypt and Israel have said they are ready to put their countries at the disposal of America so that America may make use of their bases whenever necessary.

In any case, the remarks of the American officials and other military actions in the region are not unconnected with the rumors concerning the probable occupation of the Iranian islands by America. The increasing currency of these rumors coincides with the deadlock facing Saddam. Saddam attacked Iran at the orders of world Zionism so that, according to his futile intentions, he might destroy the revolution and become the gendarme of the region. Now, he is facing a great deadlock and his downfall is very near. This is why world Zionism is not prepared to give up its mercenary agent so easily, especially if we bear in mind that the toppling of Saddam will also greatly assist the downfall of other mercenary, reactionary regimes in the region. Malek Husayn himself confessed to this fact, saying that the defeat of Saddam is his own defeat. The weakening of the position of imperialism's mercenaries in the region will endanger its interests in the region.

Therefore, it is possible that these rumors are spreading in order to create fear and anxiety in Iran and force it to soften its position and be ready for discussions. In this way, they hope to save him [Saddam Husayn] from certain defeat. It is also possible that international imperialism and Zionism wish to make use of the crises which they themselves have created in order to strengthen their positions.

The military intervention by Israel in south Lebanon can be interpreted in this way; namely, at a time when the Arab public opinion is directed toward the Iran-Iraq war, Israel wishes to make use of the opportunity and attack south Lebanon in order to weaken the Palestinian resistance movement and the movement of the Muslims in Lebanon and, if possible, to occupy another part of the Arab land. America also wishes to make use of the crises which she herself has created in the region and to strengthen her position in the region.

It is natural that America will not refrain from delivering blows at the Islamic Republic of Iran if it feels it has to in order to gain access to new bases, especially if we remember that most of the American attempts are directed at destroying the Islamic revolution and halting this new and developing movement. America is not worried about killing, massacre and bloodshed. The only thing which prevents it from speedy and uncalculated intervention in such cases is its own calculations concerning the unknown and unimaginable consequences of military intervention, which might inflict greater losses on them in the long term. Of course, this is one of the strong reasons which prevents America from indulging in any operation or intervention in the region.

Military intervention by imperialism will inflame the anti-American anger of the people in the region. At the moment Iraq, the mercenary of world imperialism and Zionism, is being nourished by them. In any case, the people of the region are not so aware of this fact and think this is a war between two countries, however, the direct intervention of America will put an end to all these doubts and hesitations. All the people of the region will feel the American intervention in a tangible way. At that time, a general uprising and revolution against the interests of America in the entire region will be started. If America intervenes, its intervention will not remain limited and the fight of the masses in the region against imperialism will grow. At that time, America will burn in the flames of the fire which it has ignited.

This is why we have no worry or fear of a military intervention. Whether the existing rumors concerning probable American intervention are serious or merely a maneuver will make no difference and will not frighten anyone. We shall welcome any kind of intervention. We shall face the aggressive power with lead bullets and with strong resolve. In any case, however, the valiant Iranian nation should be vigilant, whether these rumors go beyond the realm of rumors or not; whether America will militarily intervene or whether it will stop at the level of slogans will not make any difference. The masses who believe in the revolution should be so ready and so prepared that they can cope with any conditions. The Iran-Iraq war has caused a deepening of the revolutionary bond between the Muslim masses of the region. This bond can be easily discerned from the messages and views of our brothers. The vast majority of the Muslim people of the region defend Iran and have expressed their readiness to fight against the regime of Saddam.

In case of American military intervention, these potentialities and these strengths will be turned into action and all these strengths will be used to repulse the aggression. America gained nothing from intervention in Vietnam and that believing and brave nation rubbed America's nose in the dust, however, perhaps the stupid (?politicians) governing America may wish to experience that bitter defeat once again. This time, they will receive these blows from the Muslim masses of this region.

In any case, we welcome it. [American intervention] We are men of war and the great masses of the region are not less than the small Vietnamese nation.

RAJA'I DISCUSSES CABINET IMPASSE WITH MAJLIS

LD231210 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1037 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Excerpts] According to our correspondent, the Majlis open session began at 0830 this morning with a recital of Koran verses and was chaired by Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Hashemi Rafsanjani.

According to our correspondent, during today's open session Mr Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i, the prime minister, replied to a question by Dr Hasan Ayat, deputy from Tehran, regarding the formation of the cabinet. He said: Regarding the selection of ministers--which is one of the important issues in dispute between myself and my brother the president--many efforts have been made for this to be done regarding the rest of the ministers. I hope that God grant me success in describing all that has been accomplished so far in such a way that it will not exacerbate what already exists in society. For we all--from behind ministerial desks to the warfronts--wish for unity to be realized; that my remarks will not create a new atmosphere towards differences and especially disturbing the imam's peace.

The prime minister added: As you know, the appointment of the prime minister was not with the full consent of the president, but he agreed from a legal point of view that I should become prime minister. Later, verbally and also in reports that he submitted to the people, he repeatedly pointed this out. This pressure--that is, for the president not to accept the government--was too heavy for the government, but by accepting this responsibility we were committed to continue to carry out tasks, in spite of hearing and reading these facts [the president's disapproval]. Naturally, with that initial difference, I could have succeeded in forming the Cabinet only by the implementation of the letter that I presented in one of my speeches--that except in selecting a number of ministers, for the prime minister to be free in selecting the rest of the ministers without the president's approval, but the matter was not implemented, and we became entangled with the natural course of events. [as heard].

Many efforts have been made to select and introduce [to the Majlis] the ministers; perhaps more than ten people have been introduced for the last three ministries. The president believes that if this should be approved--that is, if the Constitution has given the president the authority to approve [the selection of ministers]--he has the authority to reject the proposed persons. But the prime minister's difficulty is that if the president rejects, who then will have the authority to decide what the conditions are for accepting and rejecting? Eventually the society of the struggling clergy invited the president, prime minister and the Majlis speaker and a number of the brothers [to discuss it]. After discussions [it was agreed that] if there is a matter in dispute between the prime minister and the president, before it is discussed with the five-man commission, it should not be published in the papers; everybody signed. Regarding the ministers, the president said: I have left the selection of the rest of the ministers to the imam.

The next day, happily, I was received by the imam and raised my problems. Before anything else, the imam said: I wish for the dispute between you to be resolved; under present circumstances, it is not right to have differences. I [Khomeyni] will not interfere in the selection of ministers; go and discuss it with the five-man commission. He [Khomeyni] stressed Mr Musavi-Ardebili; I [Raja'i] then contacted him [Musavi-Ardebili]. The minister of foreign affairs is fully known to him [Musavi-Ardebili] as a Muslim, committed, socially knowledgeable person. He [Musavi-Ardebili] said: I approve of him; I have said this before.

I submitted my proposals regarding the selection of the ministers of finance and commerce; the next day I discussed it with him [Musavi-Ardebili]. He said: In my opinion, you should keep this gentleman that I have thought of in reserve; then we should go there [as heard]. I will first propose the person chosen by you, then this person. I asked for permission to seek advise about comparing the two. Eventually, I reached the conclusion that we should go ahead with the proposal. We agreed to discuss with the president only the two that we had agr-ed upon; for this reason the three of us held a meeting. The president did not agree with the first or the second choice, neither did he agree with the third person, who had been proposed by Mr Musavi-Ardebili and myself.

This is a report on what has been done in this connection.

I ask that you hold a closed session regarding this particular matter, that the president should give his reasons for rejecting the first letter. Regarding the minister of foreign affairs--concerning whom, I am in extreme difficulty at present--I ask that the president should be present at the open [session] for the mere reason that the imam has stressed that it should exceed this [as heard]. I too should be present, the Majlis [deputies] should be present as well; a closed session should be held in which these matters should be discussed. Today's open session adjourned at 1145. The next open session of the Majlis will be held at 0800 tomorrow.

RAJA'I ATTENDS FRIDAY IMAMS SEMINAR IN QOM

GF221600 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] The Friday imams seminar opened its session today with a recitation from the Koran. The session, held in (Faydiyyah) school in holy Qom, was attended by Friday imams from various parts of the country, struggling clergymen and teachers of religious schools. The seminar is to discuss problems and sugguest a proper method for coordination.

The great and knowledgeable scholar Ayatollah Hosyen 'Ali Montazeri and Prime Minister Brother Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i delivered speeches on the seminar's first day. Ayatollah (Maskin) also addressed the Friday imams by saying: The Friday prayer is a political prayer, besides being an act of worship. With this prayer, you present the people with a way of life. He added: Studying problems and providing suggestions for the adoption of a single method is one of the goals of this seminar.

Prime Minister Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i then delivered a speech in which he said: If I am to say anything here, what I must say is that we are serving the people with all our resources. I consider you the best link between the government and the people. The government can offer material things, which are not the true need. What the people really need is that which you have to offer them.

Brother Raja'i returned to Tehran at 1300 today after participating in the seminar. The prime minister said on arrival that the seminar is a most useful political and religious maneuver, a rare event. The prime minister added that Friday imams from all the country's towns and cities attended this seminar and gathered in the (Faydiyyah) school (?without the least bit of arrogance.) Raja'i added: We hope that this political and religious maneuver will play a major role in the progress of our Islamic revolution.

BANI-SADR TOURS KHUZESTAN BATTLEFRONT 23 DEC

LD231936 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] According to PARS, President Dr Seyyed Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, commander in chief of the armed forces, inspected one of the battlefronts in Khuzestan province this evening. According to this report, the commander of the ground forces was also present. During this inspection, the war plan of the region and ways in which the (?brave) combatants of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran are carrying out operations were explained to the president. Later Mr Bani-Sadr inspected the trenches and positions of the army personnel and talked with the soliders, NCO's and officers.

ASSASINATION ATTEMPT ON PUBLIC PROSECUTOR FAILS

LD231148 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Excerpts] The enemies of the bloody Islamic revolution of Iran, who have so far suffered nothing but defeat in all their plots and ploys, in continuation of their inhuman deeds, resorted to a new plot today; this feeble and anti-God effort by the infidel enemy was--with God's benevolence--unsuccessful.

According to reports received, at 0720 today, when His Excellency Ayatollah Musavi-Ardebili, the country's chief public prosecutor, was crossing the junction of 16th Azar Avenue and North Forsat Street, a bomb exploded on his route, but lucikly did not harm him in any way.

AGRICULTURE MINISTER INTERVIEWED ON FOOD PRODUCTION

JN231715 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1120 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Interview granted to the Arabic section of the Voice of Iran by Iranian Agriculture Minister Mohammad Salamati--*date and place not given--recorded; answers in Persian* fading into Arabic translation]

[Text] [Question] Does this war have an influence on agriculture in Iran?

[Answer] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: It is natural that any war in any country will cause problems to the progress of work; what is important is the method with which the people or officials solve those problems.

Regarding agriculture, it was natural that this imposed war would bring about some deficiencies, however, when we see that our people have staged a revolution and that they are ready to confront any catastrophe or any illogical behavior on the part of other states, we realize that they are able to solve this problem as well. It is known that this war was imposed on us by the agents of imperialism and that it could have bad effects on our agriculture; this was even intended. Fortunately, we expected that and rose to face the bad effects which could have been caused by this war. This war could have caused problems with regard to chemical fertilizers, tractors, fuel and so forth. When the enemy sabotaged our refinery, it was possible to deal a blow to our agriculture. Fortunately, however, this did not happen due to the alertness of the masses and officials, who were quite aware of the way to face this problem.

Thus far, this war has not had a bad effect on our agriculture. Moreover, and due to the full alertness of the masses and peasants, the land was cultivated and utilized in a better manner than was done last year. For instance, I will now acquaint you with the statistics I received the day before yesterday. In regions like Fars, Kerman and Khorasan, particularly Fars and Kerman, the cultivation of lands increased by 30 to 40 percent in comparison with last year, when there was no war. The farmers are now planting new areas.

This shows that the revolutionary and militant people of Iran are well prepared to stand any kind of calamities and pressures. This also shows that they never bow to these pressures or collapse. As the imam has said, this war is a blessing to us. It was actually a blessing because in normal cases, the people might have not shown as much activity and as deep a feeling of responsibility. We have seen how this war made the people become more united and cohesive as well as more active and instilled in them a greater sense of responsibility in facing the problems from which the society is suffering. The officials, who come from the people, are, of course, exerting their efforts in in this direction and are solving problems with the people's help. We thank God that we have not faced any pressure or a big problem in matters related to agriculture, such as seeds, fertilizers, equipment and so forth. We have solved these matters and managed, thanks be to God, to solve potential probems.

[Question] Do you have plans to face the war circumstances if the war drags on? Will you be able to secure the people's needs without foreign aid?

[Answer] Yes. We have prepared for a possible continuation of this war; namely, we are fully prepared to confront this matter in the long run. We have studied the method of [words indistinct]. There is no doubt that our confrontation will be like what happened during these 3 months of the war, no matter how long this war continues.

I believe that we are not only capable of confronting this war and pressures, but we are also, as I have said, capable of providing better conditions for ourselves in comparison with last year, during which there was no war. This is due to the fact that we have thus far employed only a meager part of our internal capabilities.

This war was an incentive for us to mobilize our internal capabilities. In the past, due to our great economic subservience and dependence on our imports, we did not care for or utilize our internal capabilities. This war caused us to give less attention or no attention at all to our imports. It caused us to concentrate on our internal capabilities and to mobilize them. I believe that if this war drags on, it will be, as the imam has said, in our interest because we can fully mobilize and utilize our capabilities as well as activate our potentials. With this method we will, God willing, achieve faster self-sufficiency.

[Question] Does the Ministry of Agriculture have special activities in these war conditions?

[Answer] Yes; as I have said, we are seeking under these conditions to mobilize our capabilities and to achieve maximum utilization of the available capabilities as regards our equipment and human potential and the production of agricultural fertilizers, seeds and insecticides as well as other agricultural needs. We have made plans for these matters and have employed damaged [as heard] tractors. We have also made up for some technical machinery and capabilities through human potentials. We have achieved great progress in this field by substituting human power for the machines which used to make us subservient to the foreigner. In the fields in which we still have some sort of subservience, we have managed in all sorts of ways to provide and even manufacture the necessary implements. We had plans for every one of these fields. In this respect, we benefited from the presence of a number of brothers in the revolution guards, the army and mobilization corps--who are now at the rear lines of the fronts--to raise the standard of production in order to support the fronts. We have planned for the war's production requirements. Fortunately, we managed to achieve tangible and fruitful progress in this field, and we will continue to do so.

Actually, when a war breaks out somewhere, people complain about its eruption, however, we received this war with open minds here because it gave us a chance to increase our production and utilize our capabilities.

[Question] Have the economic siege and this imposed war caused you any trouble in the field of agricultural mechanization, equipment, spare parts and so forth?

[Answer] I have spoken a little about this, but I must explain it a bit further. We have not been influenced very much by the economic siege because we have not only utilized the available capabilties, but we have also managed to provide many of the essential needs. Instead of harming us, this economic siege harmed to a greater extent those who imposed it and who began to fumble about in order to break the siege as soon as possible so that they can again sell us the goods they used to sell us. We now do not at all feel a great need for these goods because we have made and are making large strides toward self-sufficiency.

The economic siege has not prevented us from satisfying our needs, which are sometimes urgent, from abroad. This means that the economic siege has not prevented us from getting some of the goods we need from abroad. We have been able to do so, and the economic siege did not have a great effect on us.

The important effect of this economic siege was that it led us to concentrate more and more on our national technology, to speed up its attainment and development and to open a chance for it. We will be able as soon as possible, God willing, to depend on our domestice production and ourselves. We will also be able to allocate greater capital and potentials to our national industry with the help of our inventors.

[Question] As I see and hear, the markets in Tehran and the other cities' markets as well are full of all kinds of fruit, vegetables, legumes and other products. Is there a dependence, even relative dependence, on foreign countries in this respect?

[Answer] This question indicates the truth of what I have said because the crops you saw in large quantities in the markets are the outcome of our mobilization of our internal capabilities. Of course we do not, under the conditions of this war, import some citrus fruits and other fruits from abroad, and we must not import them.

What you have seen in the markets is our own production. If you draw a comparison, even relatively, you will realize that the quantities are not only larger than before, but also that the prices are cheaper. This shows that we have, thanks be to God, broad internal capabilities and that we can utilize these in a better and broader way by means of accurate and defined planning. We have huge potentials, wealth and cultivatible lands. I must say that the area of cultivated land has increased by 10 to 15 percent in comparison with last year. We can even increase this area because there are still potentials that have not been utilized and used in the required and proper way in every place. Thus, we can face any deficiency.

We have realized during the way that we have to utilize these potentials in the earliest possible time and the best way. We hope that those crops you saw in the market will increase because this is our trend until we achieve self-sufficiency. This possibility is available to us now and in the future, God willing.

[Question] Your Excellency, you have now mentioned the issueof self-sufficiency. What are your plans for self-sufficiency.

[Answer] Regarding self-sufficiency in the agricultural sector, which concerns this ministry, we have several varied programs. Among them is, first, placing lands at the disposal of the farmers. This can be achieved by reviving the (?uncultivated) lands. We have made plans for agriculture in accordance with the special products produced by each area. We place all potentials as regards agricultural machinery and anything else that can help increase agricultural production, at the disposal of farmers. On the other hand, we have made plans for the establishment of a national industry to manufacture agricultural machines and implements in the country. This industry will be encouraged so that it can benefit the country.

As for the materials needed for agriculture, for the sake of agricultural self-sufficiency, such as fertilizers, seeds and insecticides, we have made plans for the future to increase the production of these materials so that we can depend on local production without having to import them from abroad. This is also the case with regard to the other matters related to the agricultural sector. This ministry has made studies, programs and plans for the far future so that we can, in addition to local self-sufficiency, produce such great quantities that will enable us to export large amounts. This reflects what used to take place in the past, when the attempts were aimed at destroying our agriculture and even our animal husbandry. We seek to revive agriculture and animal husbandry, which is an old tradition.

The Ministry of Agriculture has taken upon itself and has exerted great efforts to provide all the implements used in agriculture, such as tractors, which will be completely produced locally, and all sorts of fertiilizers needed for agriculture, which will be locally produced. We seek to plan in accordance with the needs of agriculture and the available potentials. We will rach the stage of self-sufficiency in the near future, however, these programs and plans dictate our work and plans in the future, God willing.

[Interviewer] Thank you very much, Brother Mohammad Salamati, minister of agriculture in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Thank you, listeners. May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE NO 346

LD231852 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Communique 346 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. Muslim and combative compatriots of Iran, some instances of self-denial self sacrifice on the part of the combatants of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in combating the mercenary forces of the Iraqi Army, for establishing the victory of truth over falsehood, for the revival of Islam and for guarding the integrity of our homeland, are brought to your attention:

1. In an air battle over Abadan fighters of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran shot down two Iraqi Migs at 2300 yesterday; both these encroaching planes crashed in Iraqi territory. Another encroaching Iraqi plane fled the battlefield. Last night the planes of the Iraqi criminals bombarded (?residential areas) of the city and Minu Island during an air attack over Abadan. During this night attack, several of our Arabic compatriots were either martyred or wounded and 58 houses were destroyed.

2. Thanks to the artillery fire of the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Abadan front, two tanks of the enemies of the Islamic revolution were destroyed yesterday and the personnel manning these tanks were killed. Also, as a result of heavy fire of the combatants of the navy several enemy vehicles were set on fire while trying to flee.

3. Yesterday, combatants of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, fighting on two of the Karkheh Kur fronts, in response to the fire of Saddam Tikriti's mercenaries, waged a lightning attack and stopped the artillery and mortar fire of the enemy, which was firing on part of the city of Dezful and also on part of Ahvaz. Heavy losses and damage were inflicted on the enemy. During operations yesterday in Dezful and Ahvaz, two police officers were wounded by mortar fire by Saddam's mercenaries.

4. The self-sacrificing warriors of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the cooperation of the heroic defenders of Susangerd, stopped the artillery fire of Saddam Tikriti's deceived mercenaries by careful aiming and firing on enemy positions.

5. Thanks to the (?artillery) fire of our valiant forces on the Darkhovin front, around 45 Iraqi mercenaries were either killed or wounded and two tanks, one mortar launcher, an ammunition dump and several enemy trenches were set on fire and destroyed.

6. Yesterday the combatants of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran repeatedly opened heavy and persistant fire on the positions of Iraqi forces on the Farsiab and inflicted considerable damage and losses on the enemy.

7. On 22 December, during a number of precise and calculated operations, the forces of Islam, including the combatants of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the guards corps and the Muslim Kurdish peshmerga, attacked mercenaries of the Iraqi Army on one of the western fronts and dealt the following heavy and fatal blows on the enemy forces: The destruction of two Five-Five guns, killing 52 mercenaries and wounding more than 60 enemies of Islam. During these successful operations, several machineguns, Kalashnkov guns and other military equipment were seized from Saddam at-Tikriti's mercenaries. Losses of the defenders of the Islamic revolution are reported as 14 martyrs and wounded.

8. Yesterday one Iraqi plane violated the airspace of Asadabad, in the region of Hamadan, and another appeared in the sky over Sardash, but both encroaching planes were forced to flee by the air defense fire of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[Signed] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

REVOLUTION GUARDS REPORT SUCCESS ON SEVERAL FRONTS

LD232148 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2045 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] The Public Relations Office of the Central Staff of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps today informed PARS about the activities of some of the corp's self-sacrificing men as follows:

1. On 22 December, 1980, thanks to the corps' mortar launchers in the Hamidiyeh-Ahvaz axis, one enemy tank with its crew was destroyed. Also, two Iraqi mercenary personnel carriers were destroyed and a number of infidel forces killed.

2. A guerrilla unit of combatants from Dezful's revolution guards corps yesterday penetrated the enemy's supply highway in the Fakkeh region and laid several mines on part of the highway. They succeeded in destroying five personnel carriers belonging to the deluded forces of Saddam and inflicted casualties on the enemy. Thanks to these operations, the enemy's military columns which intended to move toward this region, were forced to stop for several hours. The corps' self-sacrificing brothers, after carrying out these operations, returned safely to their bases.

3. A mortar unit of Dezful's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps also yesterday aimed their fire at enemy positions on the western bank of the Karkeh River and damaged two enemy tanks and one personnel carrier. During these operations at least four of the enemy forces were killed. During these operations our combatant corps brothers suffered no casualties.

PARS REPORTS ON FIGHTING IN KERMANSHAHAN PROVINCE

LD231340 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] PARS, citing reports received up to 0530, reports that fighting continued over the past 24 hours on the Zahab, Qasr-e Shirin, Gilan-e Gharb, Sumar and Zeleh Zard fronts in Kermanshahan Province.

During an enemy counterattack aimed at recapturing lost positions and trenches on the Zahab, Qasr-e Shirin and [name indistinct] fronts, the enemy faced resistance and intense fire by the warriors of Islam. The counterattack was repelled and after suffering heavy losses the enemy were forced to retreat. Following these operations, sporadic fighting and exchanges of artillery fire continued.

The combatants of the army, revolution guards, the (?special) force and the Airborne Division have achieved outstanding victories on these fronts over the past 5 days.

The offensive operations by the warriors of Islam, which started at dawn last Friday, are still in progress, and the forces of the Islamic Republic have driven the enemy back from the strategic positions that they held. According to a PARS correspondent, the local villagers have returned to many of their villages and have resumed their agricultural and animal-husbandry activities.

Enemy losses on the Zahab and Qasr-e Shirin fronts over the past 24 hours have been announced as follows: Forty trenches, 1 tank, 2 personnel carriers, 1 canon, 1 ammunition tent and between 80-120 killed and wounded. Heavy and light arms' battles, guerrilla operatons, and sometimes hand-to-hand fighting have been in progress on the Sumar, Gilan-e Gharb and Seleh Zard fronts. On the Gilan-e Gharb axis, one enemy canon and one vehicle were damaged. There are no accurate reports on losses and damage on the Sumar front.

FREE VOICE OF IRAN CONDEMNS IRAN'S HOSTAGE STANCE

NC231844 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Station commentary]

[Text] Compatriots: The regime of the mullahs, by stating its proposal on the payment of $23 billion by America in return for the release of the American hostages, uncovered its nature to the Iranian nation and to the nations of the world and unveiled the ugly face of a bunch of mullahs, revealing them as blackmailers.

Khomeyni's shaykh regime has shown, 1 year since the taking of the hostages, that it is on the same level as a savage tribe, (?and) the Iranian nation, after all the sacrifices it gave to gain freedom and independence, now has found in the hands of what robbers and blackmailers it has placed its destiny. The bankrupt Tehran regime has asked for approximately $700 million ransom for the release of each hostage. This amount is so trivial and ridiculous when compared to that which Iran has lost that it causes awe in each and every Iranian.

In the past some barbarian tribes took hastages and asked the families to pay ransom and the families had to give in to the conditions of the hostage-takers; in today's industrial societies, as a result of a rise in violence and (?increased financial needs) humans are taken hostage and are freed in exchange for astronomical amounts. Now, however, a government which considers itself "Islamic" and mullahs who pay great lipservice to Islam have gone one step further than the era of barbarianism and savergery and the methods of 20th century kidnappers and are asking for money from another government in exchange for diplomats that they have taken hostage.

There is no doubt that the Iranian nation is enraged with America's inopportune interventions in Iran, and there can be no doubt that both in the past regime and in the regime of the mullah--which has gained power by American help in Iran--America, with its overt and covert interventions in Iran's affairs, raised the Iranian nation's hatred toward its policy. Hatred of policy is one thing, however, and disgraceful rancour by kidnapping is something else. The Iranian nation, while condemning any political intervention by the United States of America both in the past and in the regime of the mullahs, denounces the ugly act of kidnapping by Khomeyni's wretched regime which has disgraced Iranians throughout the world.

Of course there is much to be said on whether the employees of an embassy of diplomats of a country in Iran are bigger spies than people like Beheshti, [name indistinct], Qotbzadeh and [name indistinct]. The matter is not why they have arrested a number of spies, the matter is that if these people are spies, then they should be tried in a (?free) court on the basis of legal norms, and if they are diplomats and political delegates then they should be returned to their country on the basis of the principle of immunity for people attached to political delegations.

[Words indistinct] taking of hostage people, however, be they innocent or guilty, and declaring that they will be released in exchange for some hundred millions for each one of them to be paid to the mullahs so that they can fill their pockets and gobble like they did the other national wealths or so that they can use this amount to preserve their regime and to destroy Iran more. Khomeyni's regime, by starting an imposed war, caused billions of dollars of damage to Iran and wasted the lives of thousands of Iran's children and turned hundreds of thousands of Iranians into refugees in their own country, and now it has destroyed the reputation of Iran and of Iranians by demanding money in return for the hostages' release.

We believe that Iran's assets anywhere in the world should be placed at the disposal of Iran's legitimate government and the Iranian nation and not at the disposal of the rotten and corrupt Khomeyni-Khalkhali clique. We believe that Iran's wealth which belongs to the Iranian nation should be given to the Iranian nation and not to a group of brigands who have placed the label of rule and government on themselves and are completely ignorant of all (?principles).

At any rate, [words indistinct] we condemn kidnapping and hostage-taking and, while expressing aversion on the political interventions by the American Government in Iran's affairs, we express our sympathies with the innocent families of the hostages.

Long live Iran: Long live the Iranian nation: Death to Khomeyni's regime!

RADIO IRAN REACTS TO IRANIAN HOSTAGE POSITION

NC231848 (Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian to Iran 1330 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] Sometime last week Khomeyni's prime minister, Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i, said that a minimum financial guarantee should be given by America for the hostages' release, but it now becomes obvious that this minimum which Raja'i speaks of is an amount of more than $23 billion. No one knows how the regime of the mullahs has decided on this amount, but in order to have a slight idea, I wish to recall that $23 billion equals the entire income from Iran's oil exports during the year ending 20 March 1978 and is equal to (?half) of the United States' annual income from oil. At any rate, Raja'i's minimum is so much more than America's maximum that this has created a difficulty as far as the continuation of talks with the Carter administration is concerned. The price asked by the regime of the mullahs for the American hostages makes this kidnapping the most expensive in history. It is said in political circles that if until now one thought that Khomeyni's regime did not respect and understand words and said what it wanted, it is now clear that this regime does not understand anything about figures and numbers either, since no matter what margin for bargaining this irresponsible government may have allowed when quoting the number of $23 billion for its disgraceful commodity, the amount asked continues to be extremely illogical.

VOICE OF IRANIAN KORDESTAN ON TEHRAN DEMONSTRATIONS

JN221748 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Surani Kurdish 1230 GMT 22 Dec 80

[Text] Khuzestan refugees, who have suffered from the war, have staged a demonstration in Tehran. They asked the government to compensate them for their losses, or at least to secure lodgings for them, and to allocate salaries to their families or find them jobs to enable them to continue living. The government's reply to these demands, however, will surely be that we have launched the revolution for the sake of Islam, that we are working for Islam and not to provide work, lodgings, or money. On the other hand, the government will also tell them that Iran is fighting imperialism and that these demands are hostile to the revolution and benefit imperialism. Reports from Tehran also mention that diseases such as typhoid and cholera have become widespread in Tehran and other Iranian cities like Esfahan.

VOICE OF IRANIAN KORDESTAN ON KURDISH BATTLES

JN240838 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Surani Kurdish 1230 GMT 23 Dec 80

[Text] Sar Dasht--Information received from Sar Dasht says that yesterday, Monday, 22 December 1980, a dud bomb dropped by the air force of the so-called Iranian Islamic Republican regime in an effort to kill the people in the Sar Dasht villages was discovered. The bomb, which weighed 660-720 kg, was detonated by the peshmergas of Iran's Kurdish Democratic Party near (Dimoka) village.

Miandow Ab--The heroic fighting waged by the frontline Peshmerga forces against the army and guards near Miandow Ab on 17 December 1980 has led to a fierce outbreak of fighting between the military and guards. Our correspondent in Miandow Ab said that intense armed lashes took place between the army and guards and resulted in the death of 14 guards. Our correspondent also reports from Miandow Ab that the number of army and guards personnel who were killed in the recent clashes has risen from 118, as we had previously announced, to 135. Mahabad--we announced in our newscast yesterday that the enemy army and guards have begun to advance toward (Anderqash) village, 10 km from Mahabad, in order to carry out another despicable crime. Though they imagine that they can do whatever they want, however, they will never again be able to commit any crime against this village as long as a single Kurd is left in the front. Information received indicates that the heroic peshmergas of the frontline forces, in cooperation with the region's peasants and toiling masses, have confrontedthose filthy elements with all their might and managed to inflict heavy losses on the agent army and guards. So far we have not received precise figures on the number of dead, but the enemy was seen transporting the wounded back to their bases. With great pride, history will record the feats of those who confront the enemy practices.